

No. XII.—BREEDING OF THE EASTERN WHITE-SPOTTED
BLUETHROAT (*CYANOSYLVA CYANECULA ABBOTTI*).

I have read with much interest Captain Bates' beautifully illustrated and fascinating article in the last number of the Journal entitled "Birds nesting with a camera in India."

Having only just returned from a bird's nesting trip extending over much the same ground, the account of Captain Bates' experiences were of special interest to me.

Facing page 950 is an excellent photograph of a nest and eggs attributed to the Eastern White-spotted Bluethroat (*C. c. abbotti*) from the fact that a bird of this species was observed in close proximity to the nest. I venture to think, however, that this is incorrect. Last year in Ladakh I found this Bluethroat as well as the Red-spotted variety breeding in great numbers in the valleys at from 9,000' to about 12,000 feet. Nests are invariably cup-shaped and are never domed or semi-domed, and the eggs are, in colour, a more or less uniform brownish green, something resembling the eggs of the European Nightingale.

On the other hand Captain Bates' nest and eggs agree exactly with those of the Himalayan Rubythroat (*Calliope pectoralis pectoralis*). This latter is a common bird in the Lidar Valley between 9,000 and 12,000 feet elevation, frequenting open rocky slopes with juniper scrub.

Several nests of this bird were found by me this year, mostly with young, and one contained a young cuckoo (*C. canorus telephonus*). One nest a little below the Kolahoi Glacier contained 4 fresh eggs which agree exactly with Captain Bates' description. These were taken in June 22nd. So far as I know the Rubythroat is the only one of the *Turdidae* which builds a domed nest.

Whether the Eastern White-spotted Bluethroat breeds in Kashmir proper, West of the Himalayan Range, is I think extremely doubtful. Personally I have not observed this bird in Kashmir in the summer months. The chief breeding of this species is undoubtedly Ladakh where they frequent the low thorny scrub in, or near, stream beds especially in damp or swampy spots.

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR.

B. B. OSMASTON.

No. XIII.—NESTING OF THE YELLOW-THROATED SPARROW
AT KALAN, SHAN STATES (*GYMNORIS XANTHOS-
TERNA XANTHOSTERNA*).

I found the eggs of this bird in a hole in a dead tree stump. I shot the bird and have no doubt about it. It was found at Kalan in the Southern Shan States, and, as this is outside its previously known habitat it is of interest. Some years ago I saw what I now think may have been this bird near Maymyo, Northern Shan States. There were many holes in a rotten tree stump and I assumed they were the Pegu House Sparrow and did not shoot one. On sending my man up, the whole stump broke and the eggs were smashed.

There was a small amount of dead grass at the bottom of the nest hole but there was little or no attempt at a nest.

There were 4 eggs, green, heavily marked with greenish-brown; in two the top of the larger end was solid greenish-brown. Size .75 × .58.

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[Blanford places the eastern limits of the bird "To about the longitude of Midnapore in Bengal"; its discovery in Kalan denotes a considerable extension of its range. —Eds.]

No. XIV.—NESTING HABITS OF THE INDIAN WHITE-BREASTED
KING-FISHER (*HALCYON SMYRNENSIS FUSCA*).

Most birds, during the breeding season, are fastidious in keeping their nurseries perfectly clean and free from dirt and filth. But the evidence regarding